

## The Day America Died ©Xen- 9th

America died January 21, 1977. The Neo-Socialist Jimmy Carter administration granted full pardon and amnesty, full US benefits free and for nothing, to those who refused to earn them. I never forgot that day of national scapegoatism, recalling vividly everything about it, as a national disgrace to all US military and its Veterans. After Carter's *Address to the Nation* speech, our military base all but completely closed. Reservation flags hung at half-mast except for one, which hung half-mast and upside down. Taps played on loudspeakers, set to low volume, all day and evening. I do not think anyone noticed; *shellshock* does that to a body. NCO and Officer's clubs were freely open to all personnel: we were members and non-members in kind. Rank was not an issue. They were full. None were festive. The atmosphere was one of a silent requiem and funeral: *ours*. Something in each uniformed person died that day. Few talked much if at all; some cussed, some cried openly, the rest cursed and wept alone within the darkness of his or her wounded soul. I still recall my thoughts. What in hell's name am I doing?! Why am I here?! What is the point?! The country I serve just knifed me in the back. Why suffer to earn what is now freely available to anyone; I quit. I'm going AWOL. Sitting nearby, a Senior Master Sergeant dressed in full uniform read my mind; he said, "Don't do it. They will hunt YOU down like a dog; no mercy, no pardon; son, let it go." Suddenly, a far away ghost barked, which briefly roused me from shellshock: 'Take care of each other because that is all you got...' The phantom was Gunny's prophesy from basic training that he drilled into each recruit, which forever became a part of me. How did he know? The Senior Master Sergeant baby-sat and fed me beer until my mood passed out then walked *us* to the transient barracks. They were full beyond capacity; guys were sleeping it off everywhere. He and other senior leaders, dressed in full uniform, medals and ribbons, spent all day and night babysitting to protect us from selves. While undergoing the shock of an undeserved dishonor by a nation that we defended that bayoneted us in the back for doing so. It was an important bond we shared that was never truer than on our day of infamy: "*watch out for each other because that is all you got.*" It was then that I garnered a new respect for the senior-most ranks. Before that they were just '*old flies that ate shit and bothered people.*' Afterwards, I regarded them as wise sages - 'Military Elders' do not earn high rank being stupid. Today proved that.

**GUNNY'S RULES:** Three lifetime lessons from a BMT - 'basic Military training' - Gunny Sgt that got me through Military duty and life thereafter:

1. Never screw-over anyone – especially someone with nothing to lose.
2. Do it right in drill and you will do it right in combat; this training will save your young asses.
3. Each one of you is a target. Watch each other's backs because nobody else does except as a target.  
**Take care of each other because that is all you got!**

Honorably, I did not abandon my post; where would I go – here is all I got. Nothing else makes any sense to me now. To this country we were the enemy: the hated, ugly, US Armed Forces. Gunny was right; our backs were only targets to the very people we trusted. All of us bore the same wound, from the same hand, from the same backstabbing dagger. None of us anticipated a rear ambush from an unexpected foe: our country. I don't reckon Gunny saw that one coming either. Our sin? Loyalty to a pimp-whore Motherland: *Amerika*. Our compensation? Sacrificed as duty-bound, wounded-scapegoats, bearing undeserved shame and national dishonor. Scapegoatism and blame are lame states of a *diseased people*. Today is Veterans Day, November 11, 2019. I released from dark places of mind, body and soul a grief enchained there for decades by finally accepting my disgrace – yes, **I am a US Veteran not a Comprachicos freak.** Then pondered, how many Veteran suicides occurred today because *VA* and America denied to them the necessary care each one needed to heal. Perhaps, it is only there where hell ends and grace begins. **For Veterans like me, America died January 21, 1977 with a final betrayal by this country. That single shameful act downgraded all US war deaths, crippled and wounded to less than worthless; never have I seen so many patriotic sacrifices wasted so badly by a homeland. Why not, it wastes everything else.** Patriotism is a farce; money always talks while a broke Vet walks, as would any skid row bum. I have no beef with the hundreds of thousands of young men who protested the Vietnam War and refused impressment; those injustices needed abolishment; I harbor no ill towards Hanoi Jane in how she expressed the same point. I do have issue with a treasonous Fatherland that forced war protesters, and draftees marched to war at gunpoint, into the position to do that in the first place. Then as our reward, the US government of '*We The People*' abandoned and betrayed *us in toto*. On that day, we all hung together on the same gallows pole. **The USA as far as I am concerned died January 21, 1977.**